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LETTERS

UKASE NO. 17, Jan. 16/29, 1980 of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

On January 16/29, 1980, we heard the report of Bishop Gregory concerning the arrests in Moscow of Priests Dimitry Dudko and Gleb Yakunin, as well as of many believers. These acts constitute a persecution against the Orthodox Christians who have conducted preaching and confessed the Christian faith fearlessly and without compromise with the atheists. A special boldness in this regard has been shown for the course of the past years by the Priest Dimitry Dudko, who in his many works and talks has separated himself from the contemporary policy of the Moscow Patriarchate. As is evident from his bold talks, he confessed his faith while clearly recognizing that by this he was evoking a merciless repression of himself and his family. Taking into consideration all set forth above, the Synod of Bishops *decrees:*

1. Noting with grief the renewal of open persecution against Orthodox believers in the Soviet Union, headed by Priest Dimitry Dudko, who has shown an example of confessing zeal, the Synod of Bishops calls the blessing of God on the struggle of the persecuted and entreats God to strengthen their spiritual powers in the trial which has come upon them.

2. That there be inserted in the ectenia of fervent supplication (after the Gospel—ed.) at the Liturgy the following petition for those imprisoned for faith:

> "O Thou Who once didst most gloriously liberate the imprisoned Joseph in Egypt, do now also deliver from bonds and bitter trials those who call upon Thee through us, we pray Thee, O merciful Redeemer, hearken and speedily have mercy";

and that this prayer for those imprisoned be inserted in the proskomedia:

> "O Lord Jesus Christ our God, Who didst liberate Thy holy Apostle Peter from bonds and imprisonment entirely unharmed, we humbly entreat Thee: mercifully accept this sacrifice unto the remission of sins of Thy slaves, the Priests Dimitry, Gleb, and Basil, and likewise Alexander, Vladimir, and Igor, and those imprisoned together with them, and by the prayers of Thine Apostle, as Thou art the Lover of mankind, by Thine all-powerful right hand deliver them from every evil circumstance and lead them out into freedom."

3. That as wide a dissemination as possible be given to whatever information will come concerning persecutions against believers in the Soviet Union.

4. That a letter be sent to the President of the United States in defense of those imprisoned for faith.

For the Archdiocese of Western America and San Francisco the following supplementary decree has been made:

(*Continued on page* 26)

From this day, from this hour,
from this minute, let us strive
to love God above all,
and fulfill His holy will.

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COVER: Reliquary of St. Callinicus in Cernica Monastery. The Life of St. Callinicus in this issue has been translated from the Rumanian text in *The Life and Service of the Holy Hierarch Callinicus of Cernica,* which appeared just after the canonization of the Saint, Bucharest, 1957. The icon on page 5 is from this book; the cover and all other illustrations are from the periodical *Biserica Ortodoxa Romana,* March-May, 1968.

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THE LIFE OF

Saint Callinicus

OF CERNICA IN RUMANIA

1. The Disciple of Blessed Paisius Velichkovsky

OUR HOLY FATHER and Hierarch Callinicus of Cernica, who is commemorated on the 11th of April, was born on October 7th, 1787, near the Church of St. Bessarion in Bucharest. His parents, Anthony and Flora, were Rumanian, and were good and honest God-fearing people.

At his baptism he received the name Constantine. The pious Flora, after raising up her children, was tonsured a nun in the monastery of Pasar, and ended her life as a recluse with the name of Philothea. Her eldest son at first served the Lord God as a priest, and then he also was tonsured a monk and received the name of Acacius. The youngest son Constantine followed their example.

Motherly love and care surrounded him from his earliest childhood. The pious Flora venerated the holy icons together with the little Constantine and taught him his first prayers. Thus Constantine from his earliest childhood learned about the all-forgiving mercy of the All-Holy One with the Child in Her arms, and to the end of his life he prayed to Her with the same faith and hope.

When he reached the proper age he was sent to school. Apart from the usual courses which were taught in the schools of Bucharest at that time, he studied also the Greek language, and when the majority of young people were giving themselves over to the enjoyments of this passing life, in his heart there resounded the words of the Holy Apostle Paul: *I beseech you,*

SAINT CALLINICUS OF CERNICA
Commemorated on April 11

SAINT CALLINICUS
A portrait from life

therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God (Romans 12:1-2).

Constantine was short in stature, with a bright and pleasant face, and clear and bright eyes in which one might see purity of heart and a living faith. His religious inclinations and profound faith directed him on feast days to the monastery of Cernica. At this time the Abbot of the Monastery was the pious George, a monk who followed the teachings of the Holy Mountain of Athos and had been a close disciple of Blessed Paisius in Niamets. The Abbot George established in the monastery of Cernica the monastic life according to the rules of Blessed Paisius, which very much attracted the young Constantine. And therefore in 1807 he left his parents' house and entered the holy monastery for good.

Who would think that this youth, with his virginal appearance, might endure the difficulties of the typicon and fasts and the night prayers? Who might think that he would remain many years in the holy monastery and that he would build a house of God in the midst of the island of St. George and convert the old settlement of the Cernica nobleman Stirbei into a spiritual stronghold, an adornment of sanctity, a place for the repose and treatment of human hearts? Who might think that he would become himself a superior and a saint? The old Abbot Timothy did not ask him much, since in his soul he felt that this young man who stood before him was one who *walketh uprightly* (Psalm 14:2). He called the pious Pimen, one of the spiritual fathers of the monastery, an intelligent and learned man who knew the Sacred Scriptures well, and a master in woodcarving, and gave him as his care the young Constantine. Thus Constantine became a disciple of the pious Pimen.

Soon all his labors in the fulfillment of his vows, and his extraordinary love and goodness, astonished all the monks of the holy monastery. He won the hearts of all, as the holy Apostle Paul says, *by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left* (II Cor. 6:6-7).

In his free time he carved in wood little crosses of rare beauty and gave them to the spiritual fathers and brethren of the monastery. Certain of the less zealous monks began to be ashamed, seeing his fervor. Brother Constantine wove for himself a *splendid crown of grace* (Prov. 1:9), and the pious

Pimen was happy and gave thanks to God, seeing that his spiritual son was the great hope of the monastery.

The grace of God grew in the heart of his beloved disciple, and Father Pimen decided not to wait for the full period of monastic trial,* and begged the pious Abbot Timothy on November 9, 1808, to tonsure Constantine. And thus Brother Constantine became the Monk Callinicus.

The young monk fasted and fulfilled all the rules, fought against sleep, allowing himself only three hours rest in a day, and that not lying down like everyone else, but sitting on a little stool in a corner of his cell. By his pious obedience he became an example for everyone, because he knew that in order to enter the Kingdom of God one must first have obedience. All the residents of the monastery, young and old, loved him and cherished him.

For such a strict life, on December 3, 1808, he was raised to the rank of hierodeacon, continuing to remain under the supervision and guidance of Father Pimen. By his exceptional way of life the young Hierodeacon Callinicus attracted the attention of Abbot Timothy, and in 1813, when many priests of the monastery died from cholera, the Abbot decided that Callinicus was worthy to become a priest. The ordination was performed on February 4, 1813. And although he was much younger than many monks of the monastery, because of his wisdom they begged him to become their spiritual father. Their request was fulfilled, and on September 20, 1815, Hieromonk Callinicus was made spiritual father of the monastery by Metropolitan Nectarius himself. His spiritual qualities were so great that there came to him for confession not only monks and people from various lands, but even the Metropolitan. And they all found in him the consolation and tenderness of God. And since St. Callinicus was such a believer, so humble, and knew so well the rules of the monastery, Abbot Timothy also entrusted him with the rank of Ecclesiarch of the monastery.

On March 3, 1816, the Elder Timothy died. He left this life with a peaceful soul. He had built a large church on the island of St. Nicholas dedicated to this great Hierarch; the painting of icons within the church was half finished, and he was sure that his followers would bring to a good end the work he had begun.

In this work St. Callinicus took a great part. In 1812 he, together with his instructor and spiritual father, Pimen, went to Moldavia for help. After they returned from Moldavia, the pious Pimen left for the Holy Mountain for greater repose, and St. Callinicus then was in obedience to the pious

* Usually three years or more.

Dorotheus, who in 1816 was elected by the monastery as Abbot in place of the reposed Timothy.

But Dorotheus also was very old, so that the majority of the cares of the monastery lay upon the Ecclesiarch Callinicus. Still, these responsibilities and cares did not interfere with his work of enlightening his own immortal soul.

In the summer of 1817, the pious Abbot Dorotheus sent Callinicus together with the monk Dionysius, who knew the Turkish language, to the Holy Mountain in order to call Father Pimen back to his own land and replace him as Abbot. Dorotheus felt that his end was near. This journey filled the soul of St. Callinicus with joy. Arriving on the Holy Mountain together with Pimen, he visited many monasteries of this splendid garden of the Mother of God. He saw the life of the monks, and learned much that later he applied in his governance of the monastery of Cernica and as Bishop of Rumania. With humility he listened to the counsel of learned and humble monks. He worshipped and prayed in many monastery churches, and ascended the very peak on the same path along which almost 900 years before, St. Athanasius of Athos had travelled—the Saint who was the "Protos," that is the original founder, of all the coenobitic monasteries on the Holy Mountain.

After they had helped the holy monasteries with whatever they had, and having celebrated the feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God in 1818 (August 15), Saint Callinicus with Father Pimen returned to their homeland. Coming to Cernica, they found the Abbot Dorotheus still alive, and he decreed that the pious Pimen should take his place. But the Lord changed this.

2. The Abbot of Cernica

On December 13, 1818, the pious Dorotheus died. On the following day, by God's desire, St. Callinicus was elected by all the inhabitants of the monastery of Cernica as their Abbot. This did not at all sadden the pious Pimen, as one might suppose it would, but on the contrary, Pimen remained the spiritual father of St. Callinicus and until his death continued to be his counsellor and to love his former disciple. The pious Pimen, after his return from the Holy Mountain, was placed in charge of the vestments, and in addition to this he was in charge of all the monastery business. Following the example of the Holy Mountain, he instituted very difficult obediences also in Cernica, which were too much for the local monks to fulfill; this, indeed, was why St. Callinicus and not he was chosen as Abbot.

Eleven years passed from the day that the Saint entered the monastery, and he was 30 years old. St. Callinicus was a believing man who loved Christ and was an outstanding director of all the monastery's works. In less than two years he finished the icons in the church of St. Nicholas on the great island; he finished the outside of the church also, and furnished it with everything needful. Metropolitan Dionysius of Lupu did not leave unnoticed the efforts of St. Callinicus for God's house, and on April 9, 1820, he raised him to the rank of Archimandrite.

St. Callinicus gained the love of everyone by his rare patience and kindness; but when necessary he could be very strict. Those who were lazy and disobedient among the monks he gave instructive counsel, and some of them he sent away from the monastery so that they might not be a bad example for the others. St. Callinicus said to the faithful of his monastery that "life in the monastery in holy obedience was established by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself by the example of His life upon earth."

The Saint did not allow slanders in his monastery and considered this the "death of the soul." His assignment as Abbot he fulfilled with great fervor, full of awareness of the fact that "to govern men is a great art and science, an extraordinary and difficult work" He was convinced that "the abbot is the heart of all hearts who seek him or ask instruction or consolation. He is the path to perfection for all the believing souls around him."

Sts. Anthony the Great, Pachomius and Macarius in the ancient Egyptian deserts were concerned over many monasteries; so also was St. Callinicus concerned over many monasteries and sketes, for example: the monasteries of Pasar, Piganesht, Caldarusan, the Skete of John of Tigia, Merlopolyany, Patesht, and Chiorogyrla. Under his governance there were also parish churches at Kympina, Genoai, and Tachani Buzelui. In the latter church the spiritual father of Cernica had the right to elect the chief priest.

St. Callinicus was Abbot of Cernica in difficult times. In March, 1821, the uprising of Tudor Vladimirescou began. After this the Turks attacked the country. Many inhabitants of Bucharest then found shelter in the monastery of Cernica.

St. Callinicus received everyone with fatherly love, hiding them in the cells of the Church of St. Nicholas. He sent the monks at this time to the island of St. George. On the 15th of May in the same year, the Turks came to the town of Catsela, near the monastery. Someone informed the Turks that in the monastery some rebels were hiding. Immediately the Turks surrounded it and placed cannons everywhere, intending to level the monastery.

Finding out about this grave danger, St. Callinicus assembled the people and monks in the church, and having encouraged everyone he prayed the whole night with them all for their salvation and for that of the monastery. On the following day he sent a monk to the Pasha in the village of Catsela with a complaint and assurances that in the monastery there only were simple people with women and children who had fled from Bucharest. Hearing this, the Pasha changed his intent and sent his soldiers to defend the monastery from danger.

The people who had gathered in the monastery began to be short of food, but the monks also had no more provisions. Being deeply saddened, St. Callinicus prostrated himself before the icon of the Mother of God and St. Nicholas, and with tears began to pray for help. When he finished, a miracle occurred. Through the gates of the monastery there entered five carts, each drawn by two bulls, all loaded with dry bread.

Another Pasha came to the village of Panteleimon. He entered the monastery of Pasar and kidnapped one of the nuns. The pious Callinicus went to the monastery of Pasar and resettled the nuns in the monastery of Snagov. Then he sent a complaint to the governor and the Pasha had to give up the nun. But he swore that at night he would attack the monastery of Cernica and lay it waste, and that the Abbot would not escape his hands. This time also St. Callinicus found out about the intentions of the Pasha. He again spent the whole night in tears and prayers together with his clergy. The Lord did not desire the death of this pagan, but guided his heart to good. It was midnight and all the soldiers were ready for the siege of the monastery. Before the attack the Pasha demanded that a cup of coffee be brought to him. As he gave the coffee to the Pasha, the servant shot him. The bullet was stopped by a little purse filled with gold coins which the Pasha was wearing on his chest, and thus he remained alive. The Turk was so frightened by this incident that, having taken counsel with his officers, not only did he not attack the monastery but even sent to the Abbot the sack with the money for the building of a well in gratitude that his life had been saved. St. Callinicus for a long time could not decide what to do, fearing that this was only a pretext for some kind of trickery. Finally he said to the Turks who had come with the money: "If you wish, and if you are speaking the truth, then build it yourselves next to the bridge." The Turks called carpenters and built a stone well on the north shore of the island of St. George. Even today the people call this the "Well of the Turk." Time passed, the Turks departed, but the well remained in remembrance of the miracle performed by the prayers of St. Callinicus.

Another time, the Saint was informed by the cook of the monastery that the flour had run out. "Let us place our hope in the Mother of God and the holy Hierarch Nicholas, and we will not be in need of anything," he replied. And entering his cell, he fell down before the holy icons and began to pray, entreating: "Holy Hierarch of Christ, Nicholas, overseer of heavenly goods, consoler of the poor, widows and orphans, I entreat thee: come now and help thy flock to be delivered from hunger, as thou didst save the father and his three daughters from ruin; help us as thou didst help the three generals, because now we have no help apart from the Mother of God and thee."

After the Vespers, when everyone had gone out of the church of God, there was a miracle. A cart with a great load of flour came with two drivers, who all the time asked the Ecclesiarch Haralampus where to unload the sacks with flour which had been sent as a gift by their master. When asked who their master was, they replied that he desired to remain unknown. At the time of Compline, St. Callinicus served a moleben of thanksgiving to the holy great Wonderworker Nicholas, and then went to bless the flour, after which bread was baked from it for the consolation of th clergy and the brethren.

Once in 1827, when St. Callinicus was speaking with Father Pimen, his instructor and spiritual father, there came to him a certain man with a request to lend him fifty lei. An hour after this man departed a youth came and, kissing his hand, said, "Pious father, my father has died. Before his death he ordered me to give the monastery a thousand lei. Here are five hundred lei, and the remainder I will bring later because now I do not have them."

St. Callinicus discovered from this that the one who had asked help from him was sent by God as a test of his mercifulness and love, and therefore he received back tenfold what he had given.

"What were you thinking of, Father Callinicus, when you gave alms to that man?" asked Fr. Pimen.

"I wished to give him a hundred lei, but I did not have them," replied the Saint. "I gave him only 50 and received 500, because in the Holy Gospel it is said: *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*" (Matt. 5:7).

Once in the morning, in the month of July in 1829, after the Matins, St. Callinicus was quietly reading in his cell about St. Nicholas. When he came to the sixth chapter he felt that his eyelids had become heavy and he was extremely tired after the night vigil. He decided to rest a little and fell

asleep. And St. Nicholas appeared to him in the brilliant vestments of a bishop, together with the Great-Martyr George the Victory-bearer in his battle armor, and behind them the reposed blessed Abbot of Cernica, George. "Arise," St. Nicholas said to him, "and build on this small island a church dedicated to the Holy Martyr George." "We will send you everything necessary," the Holy Martyr said to him. And the holy Abbot George added: "Do not doubt in your heart." And having said this they departed.

Awakening, the pious Callinicus bent down and continued to read to the end. Then, putting on his rassa, he went across the bridge to the small island to see Pimen, his spiritual father, and ask him whether this vision were not some kind of demonic apparition. Father Pimen replied: "No, my son, this is not a demonic apparition, but a true manifestation of God, because to me also, these same three Saints appeared to me three times this very night, ordering that you should quickly begin work. I had just gotten dressed in order to go and give you their order."

At that time on the island of St. George there were only a few cells, among which was the cell of the reposed Abbot George, in which now lived Father Pimen, his disciple; and there was also a small church built as a gift by Bratovian dedicated to St. George. St. Callinicus built next to it a large and beautiful church which exists even now.

But let us indicate how the words of the Holy Great-martyr were fulfilled: "We will send you everything necessary."

Several years after the uprising of Tudor Vladimirescou, one of the nobles of the land had secretly agreed to banish the Phanariots from the land and elect a Rumanian sovereign. For this they began to collect money and prepare everything necessary. All the money that was gathered was given to be kept by the Bishop Ionachis, who lived in Bucharest and sometimes served in the Metropolia. He was loved and valued by everyone. The nobles gave him the money with the condition that if this plan should not succeed, and they would have to flee from the country—as indeed happened—then this money should be used to build a church. The pious bishop also added to this sum a part of his own savings.

In 1831, during the cholera which was widespread in Bucharest and other provinces of the country—that is, a little after the above-mentioned apparition to St. Callinicus—Bishop Ionachis came to his friend Callinicus at Cernica and entrusted all the money to him.

(Continued on page 35)

THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

CHAPTER TEN
SUMMARY OF THE ORTHODOX DOCTRINE ON THE FATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

In the first nine chapters of this book we have tried to set forth some of the basic aspects of the Orthodox Christian view of life after death, contrasting them with the widespread contemporary view as well as with older Western views which in a number of respects have departed from the ancient Christian teaching. In the West the authentic Orthodox doctrines of angels, of the aerial realm of fallen spirits, of the nature of human contacts with spirits, of heaven and hell, have been lost or distorted, with the result that an entirely misleading interpretation is being given to "after-death" experiences that are now occurring. The only adequate answer to this false interpretation is the Orthodox Christian doctrine.

This book has been too limited in compass to present the entire Orthodox teaching on the other world and life after death; our attempt has been the more limited one of presenting enough of this teaching to answer the questions raised by today's "after-death" experiences, and of pointing readers to the Orthodox texts which contain this teaching. Here, in conclusion, we present a final summary of the Orthodox teaching specifically on the fate of the soul after death. This summary consists of an article written a year before his death by one of the last great Russian Orthodox theologians of our times, Archbishop John Maximovitch. His words are printed here in italics, and explanatory titles, comments, and comparisons, together with quotes from various Holy Fathers, have been inserted between the paragraphs in regular Roman type.

LIFE AFTER DEATH

By Archbishop John Maximovitch

> I look for the resurrection of the dead,
> and the life of the age to come.
> Nicene Creed

Limitless and without consolation would have been our sorrow for close ones who are dying, if the Lord had not given us eternal life. Our life would be pointless if it ended with death. What benefit would there then be from virtue and good deeds? Then they would be correct who say: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!" But man was created for immortality, and by His resurrection Christ opened the gates of the Heavenly Kingdom, of eternal blessedness for those who have believed in Him and have lived righteously. Our earthly life is a preparation for the future life, and this preparation ends with our death. "It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). Then a man leaves all his earthly cares; the body disintegrates, in order to rise anew at the General Resurrection.

But his soul continues to live, and not for an instant does it cease its existence. By many manifestations of the dead it has been given us to know in part what occurs to the soul when it leaves the body. When the vision of its bodily eyes ceases, its spiritual vision begins.

Bishop Theophan the Recluse, in a message to a dying woman, writes: "You will not die. Your body will die, but you will go over into a different world, being alive, remembering yourself and recognizing the whole world that surrounds you."*

After death the soul is more, not less, alive and aware than before death. St. Ambrose of Milan teaches: "Since the life of the soul remains after death, there remains a good which is not lost by death but is increased. The soul is not held back by any obstacle placed by death, but is more active, because it is active in its own sphere without any association with the body, which is more of a burden than a benefit to it."**

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* From the Russian periodical, *Soul-Profiting Reading,* August, 1894.

** St. Ambrose, "Death as a Good" (*De bono mortis*), in *Seven Exegetical Works,* tr. by Michael P. McHugh, Catholic University of America Press, 1972 (Fathers of the Church Series, vol. 65), ch. 4:13, p. 80.

St. Abba Dorotheus, the 6th-century monastic Father of Gaza, summarizes the teaching of the early Fathers on this subject: "For as the Fathers tell us, the souls of the dead remember everything that happened here—thoughts, words, desires—and nothing can be forgotten. But, as it says in the Psalm, *In that day all their thoughts shall perish* (Ps. 145:4). The thoughts he speaks of are those of this world, about houses and possessions, parents and children, and business transactions. All these things are destroyed immediately when the soul passes out of the body . . . But what he did against virtue or against his evil passions, he remembers, and nothing of this is lost . . . In fact, the soul loses nothing that it did in this world but remembers everything at its exit from this body more clearly and distinctly once freed from the earthliness of the body."***

The great 5th-century monastic Father, St. John Cassian, sets forth quite clearly the active state of the soul after the death of the body, in answer to the early heretics who believed the soul was unconscious after death:

"Souls after the separation from this body are not idle, do not remain without consciousness; this is proved by the Gospel parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:22-28) . . . The souls of the dead not only do not lose their consciousness, they do not even lose their dispositions—that is, hope and fear, joy and grief, and something of that which they expect for themselves at the Universal Judgment they begin already to foretaste . . . They become yet more alive and more zealously cling to the glorification of God. And truly, if we were to reason on the basis of the testimony of Sacred Scripture concerning the nature of the soul, in the measure of our understanding, would it not be, I will not say extreme stupidity, but at least folly, to suspect even in the least that the most precious part of man (that is, the soul), in which, according to the blessed Apostle, the image and likeness of God is contained (I Cor. 11:7, Col. 3:10), after putting off this fleshy coarseness in which it finds itself in the present life, should become unconscious—that part which, containing in itself the whole power of reason, makes sensitive by its presence even the dumb and unconscious matter of the flesh? Therefore it follows, and the nature of reason itself demands, that the spirit after casting off this fleshy coarseness by which

*** Abba Dorotheus, *Discourses,* tr. by E. P. Wheeler, Kalamazoo, 1977, pp. 185-6.

now it is weakened, should bring its mental powers into a better condition, should restore them as purer and more refined, but should not be deprived of them."*

Today's "after-death" experiences have made men shockingly aware of the consciousness of the soul outside the body, of the keener and quicker state of its mental faculties. But this awareness by itself is not enough to protect one in that state from being deceived by appearances in the "out-of-body" realm; one must be in possession of the *full* Christian doctrine on this subject.

THE BEGINNING OF SPIRITUAL VISION

Often (this spiritual vision) begins in the dying even before death, and while still seeing those around them and even speaking with them, they see what others do not see.

This experience of the dying has been noticed throughout the ages, and its occurrence among the dying today is nothing new. What was stated above, however (Chapter One, part 2), should be repeatd here: only in the grace-given visitations to the righteous, when saints and angels appear, can we be certain that it is actually beings from the other world who come. In the ordinary cases when the dying person begins to see departed relatives and friends, the experience is perhaps only a kind of "natural" introduction to the unseen world which he is about to enter; the actual nature of the images of the departed which then appear is perhaps known to God alone—there is no need for us to pry into it.

Apparently God grants this experience as the most evident way to inform the dying person that the other world is not, after all, a totally strange place, that life in the other world is also characterized by the love that one has for one's close ones. Bishop Theophan expresses this touchingly in his words to the dying woman: "There your father and mother, brothers and sisters will meet you. Bow down to them, and give them our greetings, and ask their prayers for us. Your children will surround you, with their joyous greetings. It will be better for you there than here."

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* First Conference, ch. 14, in the *Works of St. John Cassian the Roman,* Russian tr. by Bishop Peter, Moscow, 1892, pp. 178-9.

ENCOUNTERS WITH SPIRITS

But when it leaves the body, the soul finds itself among other spirits, good and evil. Usually it inclines toward those which are more akin to it in spirit, and if while in the body it was under the influence of certain ones, it will remain in dependence upon them when it leaves the body, however unpleasant they may turn out to be upon encountering them.

Here we are solemnly reminded that the other world, even though it will not be totally strange to us, will not be simply a pleasant meeting with loved ones in a "summerland" of happiness, but a spiritual encounter which will test the disposition of our soul in this life—whether it has become more inclined towards the angels and saints through a life of virtue and obedience to God's commandments, or whether by its negligence or unbelief it has made itself more fit for the company of fallen spirits. Bishop Theophan the Recluse has well said (see above, page 95) that even the trial at the aerial toll-houses may well turn out to be less one of accusations than of temptations.

While the fact of judgment in the next life is quite beyond doubt—both the Particular Judgment immediately after death, and the Last Judgment at the end of the world—the outward sentence of God will only answer to the *inward* disposition which the soul has developed in itself towards God and the spiritual beings.

THE FIRST TWO DAYS AFTER DEATH

For the course of two days the soul enjoys relative freedom and can visit places on earth which were dear to it, but on the third day it moves into other spheres.

Here Archbishop John simply repeats the teaching known to the Church since the 4th century, when the angel who accompanied St. Macarius of Alexandria in the desert told him, in explaining the Church's commemoration of the dead on the third day after death: "When an offering is made in church on the third day, the soul of the departed receives from its guardian angel relief from the sorrow it feels as a result of the separation from the body . . . . In the course of the two days the soul is permitted to roam the earth, wherever it wills, in the company of the angels that

are with it. Therefore the soul, loving the body, sometimes wanders about the house in which his body had been laid out, and thus spends two days like a bird seeking its nest. But the virtuous soul goes about those places in which it was wont to do good deeds. On the third day, He Who Himself rose from the dead on the third day commands the Christian soul, in imitation of His resurrection, to ascend to the Heavens to worship the God of all."*

St. John Damascene, in the Orthodox funeral service, vividly describes the state of the soul, parted from the body but still on earth, helpless to contact the loved ones whom it can see: "Woe is me! What manner of ordeal doth the soul endure when it is parted from the body! Alas! How many then are its tears, and there is none to show compassion! It raiseth its eyes to the angels; all unavailing is its prayer. It stretcheth out its hands to men, and findeth none to succour. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, meditating on the brevity of our life, let us beseech of Christ rest for him who hath departed hence, and for our souls great mercy."**

Bishop Theophan the Recluse, in a letter to the brother of the dying woman mentioned above, writes: "Your sister will not die: the body dies, but the personality of the dying one remains. It only goes over to another order of life . . . It is not she whom they will put in the grave. She is in another place. She will be just as alive as she is now. In the first hours and days she will be around you. Only she will not say anything, and you won't be able to see her; but she will be right here. Have this in mind. We who remain weep over the departed, but for them it is immediately easier; that condition is a happier one. Those who have died and then have been brought back into the body have found it to be a very uncomfortable dwelling. Your sister will feel this also. She is better off there; and we are in agony, as if some kind of tragedy has happened to her! She will look and surely be astonished at this." (*Soul-Profiting Reading*, August, 1894).

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* Quoted in "The Church's Prayer for the Dead," *Orthodox Life*, 1978, no. 1, p. 16.

** Orthodox Funeral Service for laymen, sticheron, tone 2; Hapgood *Service Book*, p. 385.

It should be kept in mind that this description of the first two days of death constitutes a *general rule* which by no means covers all cases. In fact, most of the examples quoted from Orthodox literature in the course of this book do not fit this rule, and for an obvious reason: the saints, being not at all attached to the things of this world and living in constant expectation of their passage to the other world, are not attracted even to the places of their good deeds, but immediately begin their ascent to heaven. Others, like K. Uekskuell, begin their ascent before the end of the two days because of some special reason in God's Providence. On the other hand, the contemporary "after-death" experiences, fragmentary as they are, all do fit into this rule: the "out-of-body" state is but the beginning of the soul's initial period of bodiless "wandering" to the places of its earthly attachments; but none of these people has been dead long enough even to meet the angels who are to accompany them.

Some critics of the Orthodox teaching on life after death find such variations from the general rule of after-death experience to be proof of "contradictions" in the Orthodox teaching; but such critics are simply too literal-minded. The description of the first two days (and of the succeeding days as well) is by no means any kind of dogma; it is merely a "model" which indeed sets forth the most common order of the soul's experiences after death. The many cases, both in Orthodox literature and in accounts of modern experiences, where the dead have momentarily appeared to the living within the first day or two after death (sometimes in dreams) are examples of the truth that the soul does indeed usually remain close to earth for some short period.* By the third day (and often sooner), this period comes to an end.

* For some examples, see *Eternal Mysteries Beyond the Grave*, pp. 189-196. Genuine appearances of the dead after this first short period of the soul's "freedom" are much rarer and are always for some specific purpose allowed by God, and not according to one's own will (see below, Appendix III).

*At this time (the third day), it passes through legions of evil spirits which obstruct its path and accuse it of various sins, to which they themselves had tempted it. According to various revelations there are twenty such obstacles, the so-called "toll-houses," at each of which one or another form of sin is tested; after passing through one the soul comes upon the next one, and only after successfully passing through all of them can the soul continue its path without being immediately cast into gehenna. How terrible these demons and their toll-houses are may be seen in the fact that the Mother of God Herself, when informed by the Archangel Gabriel of Her approaching death, begged Her Son to deliver Her soul from these demons and, answering Her prayer, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself appeared from heaven to receive the soul of His Most Pure Mother and conduct it to heaven.** Terrible indeed is the third day for the soul of the departed, and for this reason it especially needs prayers then for itself.*

Chapter Six above has set forth a number of the Patristic and hagiographical texts on the toll-houses, and there is no need to add to them here. Here again, however, we may note that descriptions of the toll-houses constitute a "model" of the soul's experiences after death, and individual experiences of them may vary considerably. Minor details such as the number of the toll-houses are, of course, quite secondary compared to the primary fact that the soul does indeed experience a judgment (the Particular Judgment) soon after death as a final summary of the "unseen warfare" it has conducted (or failed to conduct) on earth against the fallen spirits.

Bishop Theophan the Recluse writes, continuing the letter to the brother of the woman who was about to die:

"In the departed there soon begins the struggle of going through the toll-houses. Here she needs help! Stand

** This is visually depicted in the traditional Orthodox icon of the Dormition.

then in this thought, and you will hear her cry to you: 'Help!'. This is where you should direct all your attention and all your love for her. I think that it will be the truest testimony of love if, from the minute of the soul's departure, leaving concern for the body to others, you will go off and, being by yourself wherever you can, you will immerse yourself in prayer for her in her new condition and her new, unexpected needs. Having begun thus, remain in unceasing crying out to God to help her, for the course of six weeks, and indeed for longer than that. In the account of Theodora, the bag from which the angels took in order to be separated from the tax-collectors was the prayers of her elder. Your prayers will be the same; do not forget to do this. This is love!"

The "bag of gold" with which the angels "paid the debts" of Blessed Theodora at the toll-houses has often been misunderstood by critics of the Orthodox teaching; it is sometimes mistakenly compared to the Latin notion of the "excess merits" of saints. Again, such critics are too literal-minded in their reading of Orthodox texts. Nothing else is referred to here than the prayers of the Church for the reposed, in particular the prayers of a holy man and spiritual father. The form in which this is described—it should hardly be necessary to say—is metaphorical.

The Orthodox Church regards the teaching of the toll-houses as of such importance that it has included references to it in many of its Divine services (see a few of these above in the chapter on the toll-houses). In particular, the Church makes a special point of presenting this teaching to each one of its children who are dying; in the "Canon on the Departure of the Soul," read by the priest at the deathbed of each of the faithful, there are the following troparia:

"As I depart from earth, vouchsafe me to pass unhindered by the prince of the air, the persecutor, the tormenter, he who stands on the frightful paths and is their unjust interrogator" (Canticle 4).

"Translate me, O Sovereign Lady, into the sacred and precious hands of the holy angels, that being covered by

(Continued on page 27)

THE SHORTER THEOLOGICAL WRITINGS
OF ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAXIMOVITCH

Three Feasts of the Gospel

In these three sermons Archbishop John brings together three of the Church's feasts which are not usually thought of as belonging together, and reflects on their deeper meaning and connection. His inspiration is chiefly the texts of the services for these feasts, which he sees as united in their central theme: the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. There is no attempt to be "original" in these reflections, but as always Archbishop John's own theological approach gives a newness and freshness to the Church's traditional teaching.

I. THE NATIVITY OF JOHN, THE HOLY FORERUNNER AND BAPTIST OF THE LORD

Among the Church's feasts there are three in honor of God's saints which in their significance stand out from the others devoted to the saints and are numbered among the great feasts of the Church of Christ. These feasts glorify the economy of God for our salvation.

These three feasts are the Nativity of St. John the Forerunner, his Beheading, and the feast of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.

The apparition of the holy Archangel Gabriel to the priest Zacharias in the Temple, with the announcement of the birth to him and the righteous Elizabeth of a son who would prepare the way of the Lord, the Saviour of the world, and the subsequent fulfillment of this promise, are the first of the events related by the Evangelists.

The announcement of the holy Archangel Gabriel to Zacharias in the Temple begins the New Testament Gospel. The announcement of the same Archangel Gabriel six months later in Nazareth to the Virgin Mary concerning the birth from Her of the Son of God Who was to become incarnate, is a continuation of the revelation of the Pre-eternal Counsel concerning the salvation of the human race.

Three months after the Annunciation, St. John the Forerunner was born "in a city of Judah," and six months after him Christ Himself was born in Bethlehem.

These events are closely bound together. "The glorious conception of the Forerunner proclaimeth beforehand the King Who is to be born of a Virgin" (Exapostilarion, Sept. 23, Feast of the Conception of John the Baptist). The announcement of the Archangel Gabriel in the Temple, announced later to all living nearby by Zacharias in the magnificent hymn which he sang after the birth of the child John and the restoration to him of the gift of speech (Luke 1:67-79), is the forerunner of the angelic hymn: "Glory to God in the highest," which was sung in Bethlehem by the angels when they announced to the shepherds the Nativity of Christ.

The Nativity of John the Baptist is the first joy sent down by God to the human race, the beginning of its deliverance from the power of the devil, sin, and eternal death.

It is true that even before the Forerunner, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was born, and Her birth was also announced by angels to Her parents. But at that time only Her parents knew of the exalted lot which was prepared for the Virgin Who was born, and they themselves were not fully aware of what had been announced to them beforehand. Therefore it was only they who celebrated at the birth of their Daughter, while the rest of the world only later understood the joy which had been announced to it by this birth.

For this reason the feasts of the Nativity of the Most Holy Theotokos and Her Entrance into the Temple were established in the Church and began to be solemnly celebrated significantly later than the other great feasts, whereas

the Nativity of John the Forerunner is one of the most ancient and most venerated of Christian feasts. Sermons on this feast have been preserved from the first centuries.

From the day of the Nativity of John the Forerunner the preparation of the human race begins for meeting the Son of God on earth. *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people . . . And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways* (Luke 1:68, 76). These God-inspired words of the priest Zacharias after he had received back the gift of speech were made known in all the land of Judea, causing disturbance in all those living there, who asked each other in astonishment: *What manner of child shall this be?* (Luke 1:66).

Involuntarily the thought arose: Is this not the Messiah Himself? Judea was in an especially tense state of expectation of the Saviour. Thus, the child John prepared the way of the Lord already by his very birth; and even while he was still in the womb of His mother, by his leaping (Luke 1:41) he announced the coming birth of the Child Jesus, as if crying out: "Christ is born, give ye glory. Christ comes from heaven, meet ye Him" (Irmos, Canticle One of the Canon, Feast of the Nativity of Christ).

Being born exactly half a year before Christ, John the Forerunner by the very time of his birth depicted his mission of preparing the way of the Lord. He was born at the time of the year (June 24) when the day begins to grow shorter after the summer solstice, whereas the Nativity of Christ occurs (December 25) when the day begins to grow longer after the winter solstice. These very facts are an embodiment of the words later spoken by the Forerunner, after the beginning of Christ's preaching: *He must increase, but I must decrease* (John 3:30).

"The herald of the Sun, the Forerunner" was John the Baptist, who was like the morning star that announces the rising of the Sun of Righteousness in the East.

Just as the very event of the Nativity of John the Baptist was the antechamber of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, so also the feast of the Nativity of John the Forerunner is the antechamber of the feast of the Nativity of Christ. "The star of stars, the Forerunner, is born today on earth from a barren womb, John the beloved of God, and manifesteth the dawning of Christ, the Orient from on high" (Glory at Lauds of the Feast, June 24). "The whole creation rejoiceth at thy divine nativity: for thou wast shown

forth as an earthly angel, O Forerunner. and a heavenly man, proclaiming to us the God of heaven incarnate" (Cantile Five of the Canon). "O Prophet and Forerunner of the coming of Christ, we who venerate thee with love are in perplexity how worthily to praise thee; for the barrenness of her who bore thee and the dumbness of thy father are loosed by thy glorious and precious nativity, and the incarnation of the Son of God is preached to the world" (Troparion of the Feast).

LETTERS

continued.

In accordance with paragraph 2 of the above Ukase, all parish priests are to insert into the ectenia of fervent supplication at the Liturgy the above-indicated petition, and at the proskomedia the above-indicated prayer.

Ukase No. 5/80, Feb. 1/14, 1980
Archbishop Anthony of Western America and San Francisco

AN APPEAL TO ALL CHRISTIANS

From Priest Dimitry Dudko

Not long ago people were still writing: "What kind of martyrs are these" (they were talking about Fr. Gleb Yakunin and myself) "if they are quietly doing their work?" Now the situation has been literally corrected—Fr. Gleb Yakunin in actual fact is a martyr already; he has been seized and thrown into confinement, while for the time being I am still serving, although my service is accompanied by very great difficulties.

The guards are seizing the disciples of Christ . . .

People ask: what is happening? Are they preparing for the crucifixion of Christ or something else?

No! Christ was crucified two thousand years ago, and it has already been as many years since He rose from the dead. Today not only is it not the crucifixion of Christ that is occurring —it is the resurrection of Russia! And the guards who stood at the tomb have been bribed by the diabolical chief priests, scribes, and pharisees in order to prevent the resurrection. But the resurrection has begun, and nothing can stop it. The hierarchs are coming, the kings, the princes, the order of monks is coming, the ordinary priests are coming, the well-born nobles are coming, the Russian peasants are coming, all those who have been martyred are coming with brilliant crowns on their heads. These regiments of martyrs, who died fearlessly for Christ, are more powerful than any army, and the fact that they are seizing the disciples of Christ who are preparing themselves to meet those who are coming only speaks of the panic in the army of the atheists. However, this does not mean that we should simply contemplate the unfolding Divine Providence. It is precisely now that, not only for those living in Russia, but for the believers of the whole world also, the most responsible moment is approaching: when the resurrection that has begun will touch our souls.

Probably other arrests will follow the arrest of Fr. Gleb Yakunin; perhaps some fevered minds will want to

(*Continued on page 47*)

THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

(Continued from page 22)

their wings, I may not see the shameless and foul and dark form of the demons" (Canticle 6).

"O Thou Who gavest birth to the Lord Almighty, remove far from me the chief of the bitter toll-houses, the ruler of the world, when I am about to die, that I may glorify Thee forever, O Holy Theotokos" (Canticle 8).

Thus, the Orthodox Christian in dying is prepared by the Church's words for the trials in front of him.

THE FORTY DAYS

Then, having successfully passed through the toll-houses and bowed down before God, the soul for the course of 37 more days visits the heavenly habitations and the abysses of hell, not knowing yet where it will remain, and only on the fortieth day is its place appointed until the resurrection of the dead.

It is certainly not strange that the soul, having passed through the toll-houses and finished for good with earthly things, should then be introduced to the truly *other* world, in one part of which it will spend eternity. According to the revelation of the angel to St. Macarius of Alexandria, the Church's special commemoration of the departed on the ninth day after death (apart from the general symbolism of the nine ranks of angels) occurs because up to then the soul is shown the beauties of Paradise, and only after this, for the remainder of the forty days, is it shown the torments and horrors of hell, before being assigned on the fortieth day to the place where it will await the resurrection of the dead and the Last Judgment. These numbers, once again, constitute a general rule, or "model" of after-death reality, and undoubtedly not all the departed complete their course precisely according to the "rule." We do know that Theodora, in fact, completed her "tour of hell" just on the fortieth day—as time is measured on earth (*Eternal Mysteries,* pp. 83-84).

THE STATE OF SOULS UNTIL THE LAST JUDGMENT

Some souls find themselves (after the forty days) in a condition of foretasting eternal joy and blessedness, and others in fear of the eternal tortures which will come in full after the Last Judgment. Until then changes are still possible in the condition of souls, especially through offering for them the Bloodless Sacrifice (commemoration at the Liturgy), and likewise by other prayers.

The Church's teaching on the state of souls in heaven and hell before the Last Judgment is set forth below in more detail in the words of St. Mark of Ephesus (Appendix I).

The benefits of prayer, both public and private, for the souls in hell have been described in many Lives of Saints and ascetics and in Patristic writings. In the Life of the third-century Martyr Perpetua, for example, the fate of her brother Dimocrates was revealed to her in the image of a cistern filled with water which was too high for him to reach in the filthy, intensely hot place where he was confined. Through her intense prayer for a whole day and night the cistern was made accessible to him and she saw him in a bright place. By this she understood that he had been released from punishment.**

In the Life of an ascetic who died in our own 20th century there is a similar account. The Life of the Nun Athanasia (Anastasia Logacheva), a spiritual daughter of St. Seraphim of Sarov, relates:

"Now she undertook a labor of prayer for her own brother by blood, Paul, who had hanged himself while drunk. She went at first to Pelagia Ivanovna,* the blessed one who lived in The Diveyevo Convent, to take counsel from her as to what she could do to make easier the lot beyond the grave of her brother, who had unfortunately and dishonorably ended his earthly life. After counsel, the follow-

** Lives of Saints, February 1; English translation of this passage in *Orthodox Life,* 1978, no. 1, pp. 23-24.

* Her complete Life in Russian is contained in Archimandrite Seraphim Chichagov, *The Diveyevo Chronicle,* St. Herman Brotherhood, 1978, pp. 530ff.

ing was decided: Anastasia would lock herself up in her cell to fast and pray for him, every day reading 150 times the prayer, 'Virgin Mother of God, rejoice . . .' At the end of forty days she saw a great abyss; at the bottom of it was a bloody stone, and upon it there lay two men with iron chains on their necks; one of them was her brother. When she informed the blessed Pelagia about this vision the latter advised her to repeat this labor. At the end of the second forty days she saw the same abyss, the same stone on which were the same two people with chains around their necks, but her brother was now standing and was going around the stone, but then fell again on the stone; the chain was still around his neck. After she informed Pelagia Ivanovna about this dream, the latter advised her to perform the same labor for a third time. After forty more days Anastasia saw the same abyss and the same stone, but now there was only one man, unknown to her, and her brother had gone away from the stone and was hidden from sight. The one who remained on this rock said, 'It is good for you; you have powerful intercessors on the earth.' After this, blessed Pelagia said, 'Your brother has been delivered from tortures, but he has not received blessedness.' "**

There are many similar incidents in the Lives of Orthodox Saints and ascetics. If anyone is inclined to be too literal-minded about such visions, it should perhaps be said that of course the forms which such visions take (usually in dreams) are not necessarily "photographic" views of the way the soul appears in the other world, but rather are images which convey the spiritual truth of the soul's betterment in the other world through the prayers of those who remain on earth.

PRAYER FOR THE DEAD

How important commemoration at the Liturgy is may be seen in the following occurrence: Before the uncovering of the relics of St. Theodosius of Chernigov (1896), the priest-monk (the renowned Starets Alexis of Goloseyevsky

** *Soul-Profiting Reading,* June, 1902, p. 281.

Hermitage, of the Kiev-Caves Lavra, who died in 1916) who was conducting the re-vesting of the relics, becoming weary while sitting by the relics, dozed off and saw before him the Saint, who told him: "I thank you for laboring for me. I beg you also, when you will serve the Liturgy, to commemorate my parents"—and he gave their names (Priest Nikita and Maria). "How can you, O Saint, ask my prayers, when you yourself stand at the heavenly Throne and grant to people God's mercy?" the priest-monk asked. "Yes, that is true," replied St. Theodosius, "but the offering at the Liturgy is more powerful than my prayer."*

Therefore, panikhidas and prayer at home for the dead are beneficial for them, as are good deeds done in their memory, such as alms or contributions to the church. But especially beneficial for them is commemoration at the Divine Liturgy. There have been many appearances of the dead and other occurrences which confirm how beneficial is the commemoration of the dead. Many who died in repentance, but who were unable to manifest this while they were alive, have been freed from tortures and have obtained repose. In the Church prayers are ever offered for the repose of the dead, and on the day of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, in the kneeling prayers at vespers, there is even a special petition "for those in hell."

St. Gregory the Great, in answering in his *Dialogues* the question, "Is there anything at all that can possibly benefit souls after death?" teaches: "The Holy Sacrifice of Christ, our saving Victim, brings great benefits to souls even after death, provided their sins (are such as) can be pardoned in the life to come. For this reason the souls of the dead sometimes beg to have Liturgies offered for them . . . The safer course, naturally, is to do for ourselves during life what we hope others will do for us after death. It is better to make one's exit a free man than to seek liberty after one

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* These names had been unknown before this vision. Several years after the canonization, St. Theodosius' own Book of Commemoration was found in the monastery where he had once been abbot, which confirmed these names and corroborated the vision. See the Life of Elder Alexis in *Pravoslavny Blagovestnik*, San Francisco, 1967, no. 1 (in Russian).

is in chains. We should, therefore, despise this world with all our hearts as though its glory were already spent, and offer our sacrifice of tears to God each day as we immolate His sacred Flesh and Blood. This Sacrifice alone has the power of saving the soul from eternal death, for it presents to us mystically the death of the Only-begotten Son" (*Dialogues* IV: 57, 60, pp. 266, 272-3).

St. Gregory gives several examples of the dead appearing to the living and asking for or thanking them for the celebration of the Liturgy for their repose; once, also, a captive whom his wife believed dead and for whom she had the Liturgy celebrated on certain days, returned from captivity and told her how he had been released from his chains on some days—the very days when the Liturgy had been offered for him. (*Dialogues* IV: 57, 59, pp. 267, 270).

Protestants generally find the Church's prayer for the dead to be somehow incompatible with the necessity of finding salvation first of all in this life: "If you can be saved by the Church after death, then why bother to struggle or find faith in this Life? Let us eat, drink, and be merry . . ." Of course, no one holding such a philosophy has ever attained salvation by the Church's prayer, and it is evident that such an argument is quite artificial and even hypocritical. The Church's prayer cannot save anyone who does not wish salvation, or who never offered any struggle for it himself during his lifetime. In a sense, one might say that the prayer of the Church or of individual Christians for a dead person is but another result of that person's life: he would not be prayed for unless he had done something during his lifetime to inspire such prayer after his death.

St. Mark of Ephesus also discusses this question of the Church's prayer for the dead and the improvement it brings in their state, citing the example of the prayer of St. Gregory the Dialogist for the Roman Emperor Trajan—a prayer inspired by a good deed of this pagan Emperor. (See below, Appendix I.)

Every one of us who desires to manifest his love for the dead and give them real help, can do this best of all through prayer for them, and in particular by commemorating them at the Liturgy, when the particles which are cut out for the living and the dead are let fall into the Blood of the Lord with the words: "Wash away, O Lord, the sins of those here commemorated by Thy Precious Blood, by the prayers of Thy saints." We can do nothing better or greater for the dead than to pray for them, offering commemoration for them at the Liturgy. Of this they are always in need, and especially during those forty days when the soul of the deceased is proceeding on its path to the eternal habitations. The body feels nothing then: it does not see its close ones who have assembled, does not smell the fragrance of the flowers, does not hear the funeral orations. But the soul senses the prayers offered for it and is grateful to those who make them and is spiritually close to them.

O relatives and close ones of the dead! Do for them what is needful for them and what is within your power. Use your money not for outward adornment of the coffin and grave, but in order to help those in need, in memory of your close ones who have died, for churches, where prayers for them are offered. Show mercy to the dead, take care for their souls. Before us all stands that same path, and how we shall then wish that we would be remembered in prayer! Let us therefore be ourselves merciful to the dead.

As soon as someone has reposed, immediately call or inform a priest, so he can read the "Prayers on the Departure of the Soul," which are appointed to be read over all Orthodox Christians after death. Try, if it be possible, to have the funeral in church and to have the Psalter read over the deceased until the funeral. The funeral need not be performed elaborately, but most definitely it should be complete, without abbreviations; think at this time not of yourself and your convenience, but of the deceased, with whom you are parting forever. If there are several of the deceased in church at the same time, don't refuse if it be proposed to serve the funeral for all together. It is better for a funeral

to be served for two or more of the deceased at the same time, when the prayer of the close ones who have gathered will be all the more fervent, than for several funerals to be served in succession and the services, owing to lack of time and energy, abbreviated; because each word of prayer for the reposed is like a drop of water to a thirsty man. Most definitely arrange at once for the serving of the forty-day memorial, that is, daily commemoration at the Liturgy for the course of forty days. Usually, in churches where there are daily services, the deceased whose funerals have been served there are commemorated for forty days and longer. But if the funeral is in a church where there are no daily services, the relatives themselves should take care to order the forty-day memorial wherever there are daily services. It is likewise good to send contributions for commemoration to monasteries, as well as to Jerusalem, where there is constant prayer at the holy places. But the forty-day memorial must be begun immediately after death, when the soul is especially in need of help in prayer, and therefore one should begin commemoration in the nearest place where there are daily services.

Let us take care for those who have departed into the other world before us, in order to do for them all that we can, remembering that "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

One day this whole corruptible world will come to an end, and the everlasting Kingdom of Heaven will dawn, where the souls of the redeemed, joined to their resurrected bodies, will dwell forever with Christ, immortal and incorruptible. Then the partial joy and glory which souls know even now in heaven will be replaced by the fullness of joy of the new creation for which man was made; but those who did not accept the salvation which Christ came to earth to offer mankind will be tormented forever—together with their resurrected bodies—in hell. St. John Damascene, in the final chapter of his *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith,* well describes this final state of the soul after death:

"We also believe in the resurrection of the dead, for there really will be one, there will be a resurrection of the dead. Now, when we say resurrection, we mean a resurrection of bodies. For resurrection is a raising up again of one who has fallen. But, since souls are immortal, how shall they rise again? Well, if death is defined as a separation of soul from body, the resurrection is the perfect rejoining of soul and body, and the raising up again of the dissolved and fallen living being. Therefore, the very body which is corrupted and dissolved will itself rise up incorruptible. For He Who formed it in the beginning from the dust of the earth is not incapable of raising it up again after it has again been dissolved and returned to the earth whence it was taken by the decision of its Creator . . .

"Now, if the soul had engaged alone in the contest for virtue, then it would also be crowned alone; and if it alone had indulged in pleasures, then it alone could be justly punished. However, since the soul followed neither virtue nor vice without the body, it will be just for them to receive their recompense together . . .

"And so, with our souls again united to our bodies. which will have become incorrupt and put off corruption, we shall rise again and stand before the terrible judgment seat of Christ. And the devil and his demons, and his man, which is to say, the Antichrist, and the impious and sinners will be given over to everlasting fire, which will not be a material fire such as we are accustomed to, but a fire such as God might know. And those who have done good will shine like the sun together with the angels unto eternal life with our Lord Jesus Christ, ever seeing Him and being seen, enjoying the unending bliss which is from Him, and praising Him together with the Father and the Holy Spirit unto the endless ages of ages. Amen."*

* *Exact Exposition,* Book Four, ch. 27, in The Fathers of the Church, vol. 37, 1958, pp. 401, 402, 406.

Saint Callinicus

(Continued from page 13)

In 1823 St. Callinicus began to build the church, in 1836 he finished it, and on the day of the Transfiguration in that year it was consecrated.

Two years later, on January 8, 1838, this church was destroyed by the great earthquake which occurred on that day. St. Callinicus restored it again and built cells around it with strong walls as if for a fortress; this is the way it remains up to the present day. Everything was finished in 1842. In 1846 he began to build a church in the Skete of Pasar, which was consecrated a year later.

St. Callinicus also raised up a church in Buesht on the Baragan river, and in this village he built stone houses for the overseers and a barn for the animals of the monastery of Cernica. He tilled the land and planted willows in the middle of the field, to the astonishment of everyone.

During the time when Alexander Gika was governor, several times he was called to be elected Metropolitan, but he refused. He did not wish to leave the monastery where he had lived and labored so many years.

Approximately at the same time someone living in the monastery, a man of evil conduct and diabolical soul, gave poison to St. Callinicus. Such an evil deed deeply grieved and saddened the whole of the clergy and brethren of the monastery. The Saint was near death, and therefore he advised everyone to choose a new Abbot. The monastic assembly chose the pious Benjamin Katulos.

St. Callinicus lay in his cell, tormented day and night, awaiting his end. Once at night when praying he began to entreat: "O, Lord my God, I did not think and do not wish to die of poison." And immediately he heard a mystical voice saying to him: "You will not die from poison. Arise and be well, because soon you will be bishop in Rymnik, where you will govern the church on the right path, for its servants have caused it to go away from the right way." And as the mystical voice was giving him this reply, he felt himself completely well. Arising, he went to church. This was at the hour when the monks were singing prayers at midnight.

Seeing that he sat in his place completely well, the monks were deeply astonished. At the end of the service they all went to the cell of St. Callinicus and asked him: "What kind of a miracle is this? And how is it that you have become suddenly well?" He told them everything in detail that he had

heard from this mystical voice, and they all rejoiced and began to give thanks to the Lord God.

In 1849, the sovereign, Barbou Dimitris Stirbei, returned from the High Gates (this was the name in Rumania for Constantinople), being assigned to govern the land of Rumania. Since he was an intelligent man and a good ruler, he decided to put in order the church matters also, electing bishops where they were necessary.

On September 14, 1850, Archimandrite Callinicus was chosen to be bishop of Rymnik.

With difficulty did Callinicus agree to accept this post. But in the end, not desiring to grieve the sovereign, he accepted the episcopal rank, thus parting with his monastery. In his place the monastic assembly chose as elder the Archimandrite Nicander.

The parting was very touching. All the monks of the monastery loved him very much. After all, he was their spiritual father who had guided them with a good word and counsel on the path of salvation.

"And when he departed from Cernica," one of the monks relates, "it was ordered that the great bell be sounded until all the clergy had gathered in church, so that he might say farwell to them. And everyone hastened to church; even the infirm ones left their beds so as to receive the blessing of their beloved father. In all there were 350 men in the monastery. And after everyone had assembled in church, he came also, surrounded by his pious fathers and clergy, and read to them the prayer of forgiveness and then began to give them counsels for the preservation of the monastic and church rules. After the service all went out of the church and the sound of the bells and the tears of those who accompanied him softened even the hardest hearts. Secretly everyone went up to a certain place where a carriage was waiting for St. Callinicus, and he got on it, taking with him several monks from among the clergy close to him for the Divine services in his diocese."

Thus did St. Callinicus depart from the monastery of Cernica, in which he had served with fear of God and faith and love for almost 43 years, of which for 32 years he was Abbot.

Sitting in the carriage which was taking him far away, he looked with eyes filled with tears on the domes of the two churches of the monastery. He remembered his labors which he had offered here, and how as a very young man he had crossed the holy threshold of the holy monastery and all that he was leaving behind him. Later, when he returned as bishop and again returned to Cernica, he again showed his fervor for the good of the monastery.

3. The Bishop and Wonderworker

The See of the Bishop of Rymnik, for which St. Callinicus was now setting out, was in Crayov. It was here that he had been appointed earlier also, in 1847. The journey to Crayov was long. In many villages and towns the believers met him with bread and salt, according to the ancient custom. The renown of his sanctity and meekness had spread even to such remote places. The believers of Crayov met him with great joy. The bells of the churches of the city rang as on Pascha, and many sang songs composed in honor of his coming:

"Vlachia, rejoice and leap for joy,
Behold Callinicus the meek is coming to us."

So many people met the Saint that the church of the Holy Great-martyr Demetrius could not contain them all.

Prayers of thanksgiving were read for the health of the newly-arrived bishop. The rulers of the city, the clergy, and the people wished him long life and success in the work for God. For a long time the fortress of Banilor had not known such remarkable moments.

St. Callinicus began his pastoral service on the following day. He looked over all the monasteries and churches, corrected things that were wrong in them, and taught everyone by his good example and mercy. His dwelling was a true refuge for the poor and offended, so good and merciful was he.

And so things went until the summer of 1854, when war broke out between the Russians and the Turks. These were difficult times for the land. On the 18th of July, the Turks entered Olteni (this was the province whose capital was Crayov). Despite the fact that St. Callinicus had received an order to return to Bucharest together with his clergy, helpers and the archives of the episcopate, he followed an inward voice and set out for Rymnikul Vylchi, the former See of the episcopate. A fire which had broken out on the first day of Pascha (March 27, 1847) had burnt the church and all the buildings around it. Everything was in ruins, and everyone was waiting for someone sent by God to restore them again to life.

In the course of two years he restored everything. A description of the church restored by Bishop Callinicus says: "In 1847 the church was destroyed because of its ancientness and a fire, which likewise burned part of the city. There remained only the half-ruined walls until 1850, when the pious

Callinicus, having become bishop and seen these ruins, restored the church and all the buildings which belonged to it, and likewise restored the seminary and the infirmary and the school for the clergy. All this he completed in the days of our believing sovereign, the General Barbou Dimitris Stirbei, 1856, November 3."

St. Callinicus likewise was skilled with the pen. He himself wrote a "Lamentation" and some verses, an "Instruction" for monks, and a historical description or "Chronicle" of the events of 1821.

At the same time that the episcopate was returned from Crayov to Rymnik, he put the printing shop in Rymnik in order and printed many church and spiritual books, providing them for the clergy and believers.

As indicated above, St. Callinicus received from God the gift of working miracles. The believers at that time knew this. Thus one of his disciples relates: "I was near the Saint day and night. I was his closest servant and knew his holy life, although I was a young monk. I was struck by his supernatural life, all the more in that I had read much about the life of other holy fathers, and now I understood that I was serving a living Saint."

St. Callinicus knew the thoughts of men: "Often His Holiness," wrote the same disciple, "after the evening prayers would call me and speak to me about faith and my monastic obligations. Once, sitting with His Holiness and listening to him, I began to think that after death he would be glorified by God on earth. And he immediately answered my secret thoughts: 'Why do you think so highly of me? I have asked God that after my death, my sinful body might be returned to the dust and not as you think, my pious one.'

"I replied to him: 'Forgive me, Your Holiness, that I have been thinking thus about you.' After this he ordered that as long as he was alive I should not speak about this gift of God, because 'My son,' he told me, 'there are many monks and laymen who are believers only in words, but their thoughts and deeds are far from Christian righteousness; therefore they do not need to know what you know about me. But as for those who are true Christians, after my death you may tell them about me, both orally and in written form.' "

St. Callinicus once turned to dust the body of a man long dead. In the summer of 1854, St. Callinicus was going up the river Valya Zhiului to the monastery of Dainich. The believers of all the villages came out to meet him and receive his blessing. Among them were also the sons of a certain rich man who had entreated him to spend the night with him, because the

next day was Saturday and they wanted to have a panikhida served for their reposed father.

The Saint agreed and stayed to spend the night with them. In the evening with great sorrow they told him that although their father had died long before, when digging up his grave they had seen that up until now his body had not turned to dust. Three times both bishops and priests had served panikhidas for him, but the body had still not been turned to dust. Therefore they thought that there must be some kind of curse binding him. "Now we have dug up his grave a fourth time," they said, "and may the will of God be with us."

The next day St. Callinicus served the Divine Liturgy in the village church, then went to the grave of the reposed one. The body was removed from the grave and placed next to the church wall. He was clothed in long black garments of silk, and everything looked like new.

After the end of the service, the Saint began to read the prayer for the forgiveness of all sins. While he was reading, the body of the reposed one began to turn to dust, beginning with his feet When the Saint finished the prayer there remained only a heap of dust together with white bones. Everyone present began to weep and glorify the miraculous power with which the Lord had rewarded the holy Hierarch Callinicus.

St. Callinicus knew the hour of the death of the elder of the monastery of Cernica, Nicander. After remaining three days in the Skete of Dainich, St. Callinicus set out on foot on the mountain paths to his metochion. While he was walking behind the others, he suddenly stopped at a certain hill and sat upon the earth and began to weep. When one of his disciples inquired whether he were sick, he replied, "No, my son, but I did not think that I would outlive the elder of Cernica, Nicander. Nicander, the elder of Cernica, is dead."

The disciple remembered the day and hour of the conversation with St. Callinicus. Two weeks later he was sent on business to Bucharest, and from there he set out for Cernica, and there he learned that the elder had died at the day and hour when he had been with St. Callinicus in the mountains of the Skete of Dainich.

St. Callinicus healed one woman who was possessed by a devil. This miracle he performed in the church of the episcopate of Rymnik, in the presence of Father Kostako, the Archpriest of the city, Archimandrite Anastasius Baldovin, and the landholder Kostako, who built the church of the episcopate, the Skete of Frasina, and other sketes.

The Saint served the Divine Liturgy, and after it was finished he was asked to read a prayer for a very sick woman. She was possessed by an evil spirit. She was held by four men, and she screamed and foamed. Her clothing was all torn. With great labor they were able to place her on her knees before St. Callinicus.

Having read the prayer, the Saint blessed her three times and said to her: "In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, arise!" And immediately the woman arose, well in soul and body, bowed down to the holy icons and gave thanks to God in front of everyone. Then she asked for clothes, since she could not go out in such torn rags.

St. Callinicus also healed the son of the landholder Kostako, who had helped him at work and in whom for some time there had appeared the symptoms of epilepsy, which every day became worse.

Once this youth fell on the ground in a fit, foaming at the mouth. The unfortunate landholder ran to the Bishop. He fell to the feet of the Saint and told him of his great sorrow. "Go home," said St. Callinicus, "go and pray to the Mother of God."

When the landholder returned home, he found his son praying before the icon of the Mother of God. And the son said to him and to the others of his household: "You pray also to the Mother of God. Do you not see how the Bishop is praying? Now I will no longer be sick."

The landholder, seeing this miracle, hastened to the Bishop and gave thanks to him. At his gate he met the Archimandrite Anastasius Baldovin, who had in his hands a silver reliquary with the head of the holy Martyr Mercurius.

"Where are you going?" the blessed one asked him.

"I am going to bow down to the Bishop, since my son has become well," the landholder replied.

"This is why the Bishop has sent me to you with the relics of St. Mercurius, so that your boy might kiss them," said the blessed Anastasius. From this hour the son of the landholder Kostako was no longer ill.

St. Callinicus healed the daughter of a certain peasant in the village of Muioriaska-Vylcha. All the people knew that it was not allowed for a single woman to set foot on the Holy Mountain of Athos. This rule was established in the year 1000 by St. Athanasius the Athonite, the founder and patron of the monasteries of the Holy Mountain.

St. Callinicus kept to the same rules in the Skete of Frasina, which he restored. At the boundary between the Skete and the village of Muioriaska

a tablet had been set up, on which was written: "By God's mercy, we, Callinicus, Bishop of Rymnik of New Severin, have ordered and do order, that beginning from this place not a single woman should set foot."

No one violated this order. The believers feared to draw upon themselves a curse. If any animal should pass over the boundary and a woman or young girl would see this, she would run to the village and call a man to lead the animal out.

In the summer of 1862 or 1863 it happened that one girl from the village of Muioriaska, chasing a cow, crossed the boundary by mistake. She became ill with fits. Her parents, filled with despair, began to entreat the village priest to gain the mercy of St. Callinicus, that he might forgive and heal her.

"What a sad incident," said the Saint when he heard from Father John about her misfortune. "We will go and pray for her."

And having said this, he went to the village. Entering the house of the sick one, he found her in bed, in great suffering. He went up to her and asked her: "Do you recognize me?" The girl nodded her head as a sign that she did recognize him. Who did not know St. Callinicus?

Having stroked her on the head, St. Callinicus said, "You will become well; yes, you will become well. I have forgiven you. Let us pray to the Lord that He also might forgive you." Then he read a prayer of remission and said these words: "Yes, yes, you will become well," and departed. And in fact the girl was healed. And the news of the gift of Callinicus to heal the sick was spread far and wide.

Such miraculous deeds St. Callinicus performed for the course of his 17 years in the land of Olteni as Bishop of Rymnik. He was 80 years old, he had served God for 62 years, and all his concern and all the efforts he had made in fulfilling his duty had very much weakened him. Therefore, and likewise feeling ahead of time his approaching death, and considering himself unworthy to continue to be Bishop, in 1867 he decided to return to the monastery of Cernica, where he also desired to be buried.

4. The Saint of Rumania

On May 24, 1867, he arrived in Cernica. Some of the old monks who still lived there reminded him of the years of his youth and his difficult labors. The Saint looked with satisfaction upon the rich harvest from the tree which he himself had planted, which bound the past with the future. He looked also upon the quiet waters of the river Kolentina, which flowed just

as quietly as it had so many years before . . . Here everything was close to his soul and heart. He had given life to the island of St. George, had raised up the church in honour of this Saint and Great-martyr, erected strong walls around the church. Everything spoke to him of his labors and strivings for the glorification of the Lord God. And now, worn cut and old, he had returned here to rest, and likewise to die here.

On the second day after his return, the Saint went to church and prayed for a long time before the icons, as if feeling that he would see them no more. At the end of the service he distributed prosphoras to all the clergy and brethren, blessed everyone, and then returned to his cell, from which he never departed until the end of his life.

St. Callinicus lay in his cell almost a year. Everyone deeply suffered the approach of his death. They could not be reconciled to the thought that soon they would be left alone. The separation from St. Callinicus was extremely difficult for them.

On Great Thursday, 1868, he called seven priests, who gave him Unction, and after the end of the service he said to them: "Fathers, pray for me to the Lord, for in these days we shall be separated."

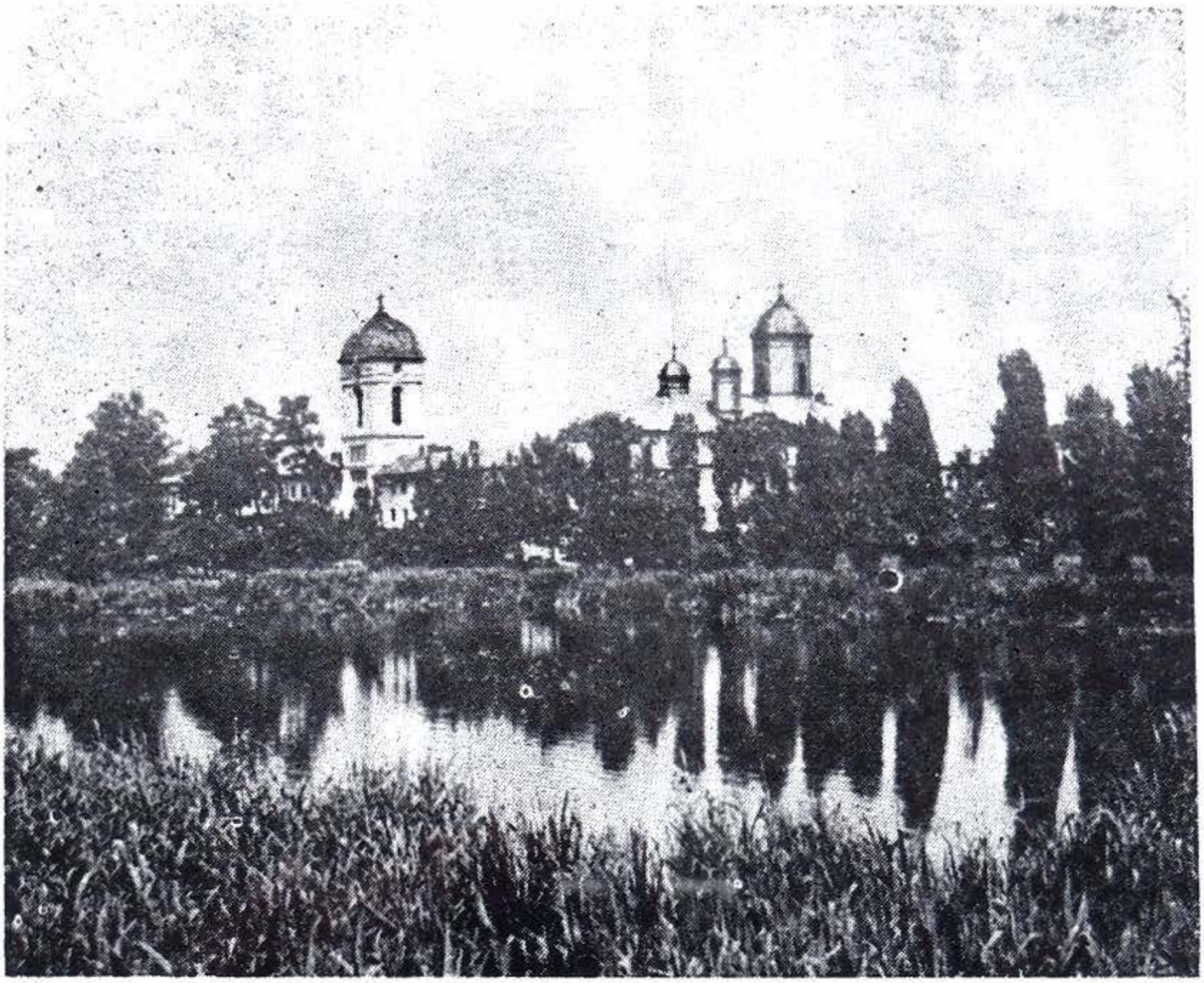
On the day of the Bright Resurrection of Christ he asked one of the priests to serve the Divine Liturgy for him and give him Communion. At the end of the service one of the disciples close to him asked his blessing before his departure to Rymnik, where he had been sent.

"You will go on the 11th of June," the Saint replied to him, "but until then read the prayer rule for me, because out of weakness I cannot read it myself."

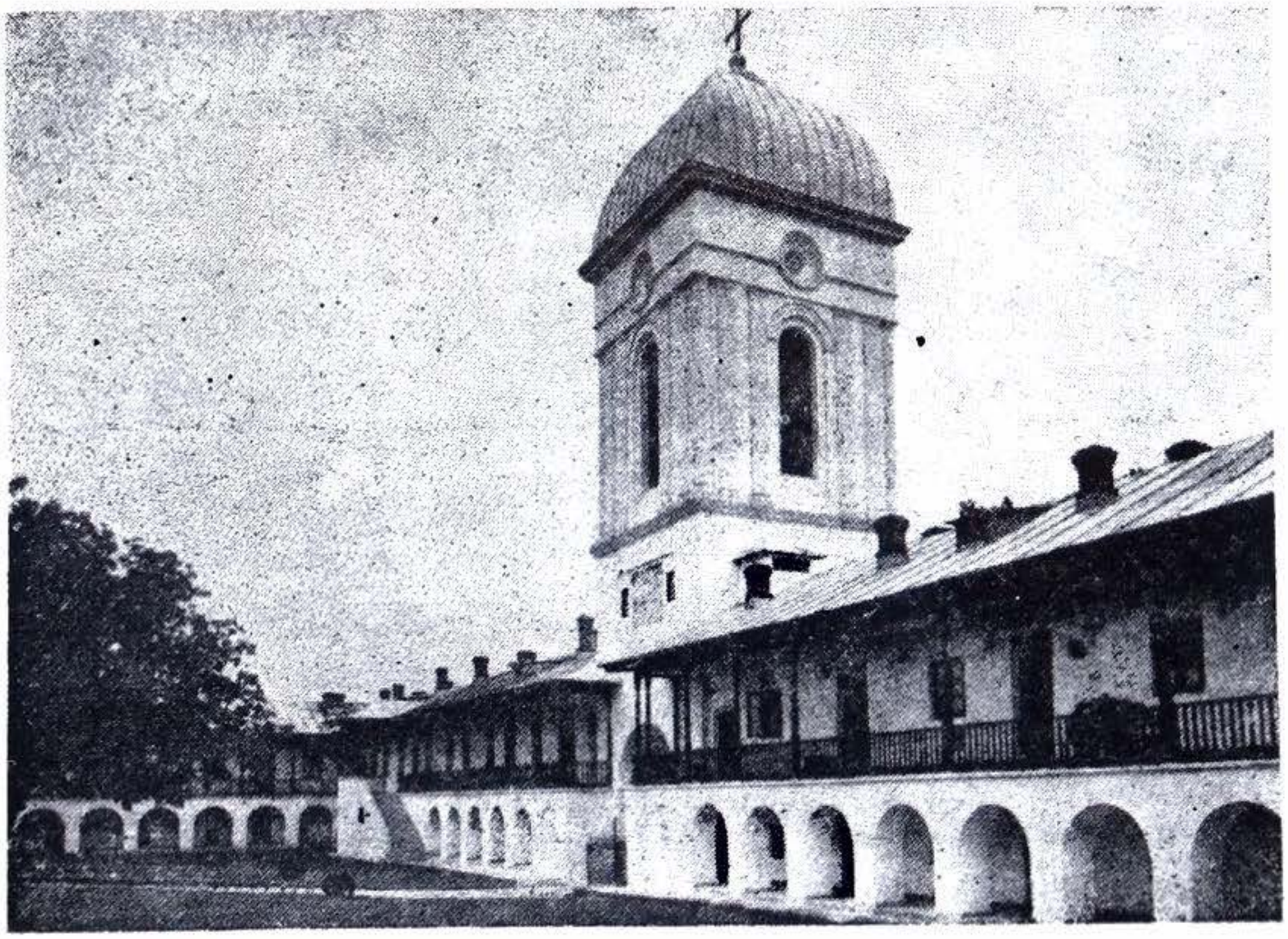
On the indicated day, about five o'clock in the morning, the Saint asked his disciple Herman to give him a clean shirt, and then he looked and saw that certain high-ranking persons were preparing to enter his cell to say farewell to him. Then he asked that he be given a cross. He kissed it and said: "Holy Cross, help me," and placing his head on the breast of his disciple Herman, he sighed deeply three times and gave over his spirit to God.

St. Callinicus lived almost 81 years. Of these, 43 he spent in Cernica, for 17 years he was bishop in Rymnik, and the last year of his life he again spent in Cernica.

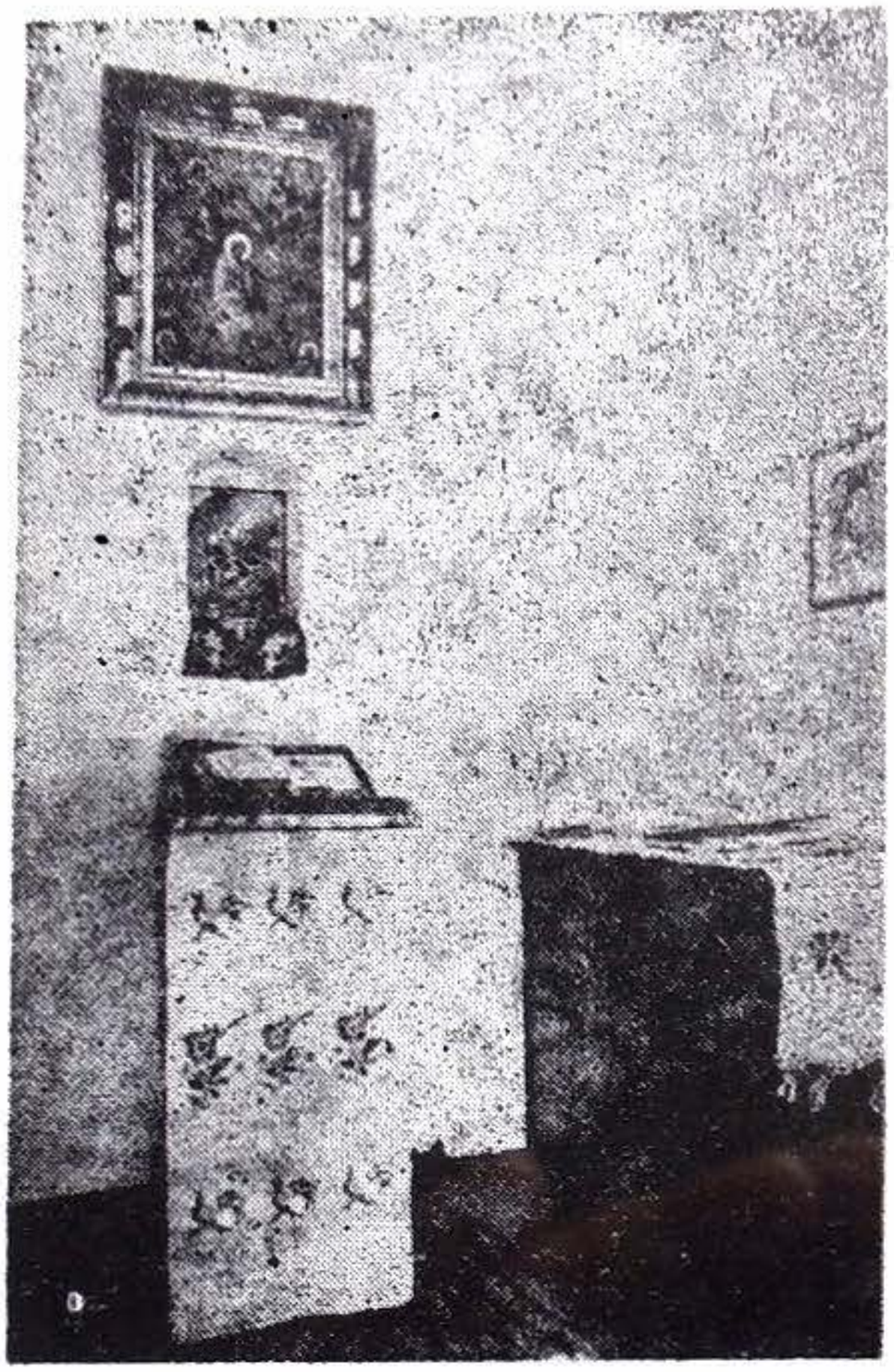
It is essential to recall that St. Callinicus knew the hour of his death. For two weeks before his death he told the pious Anastasius Baldovin, one of his disciples: "Now, there remains to me 14 days to live, and then I will go away from you. See that you do not forget to clothe me in the garments which I have indicated to you."



The Cernica Island Monastery
A general view over the waters

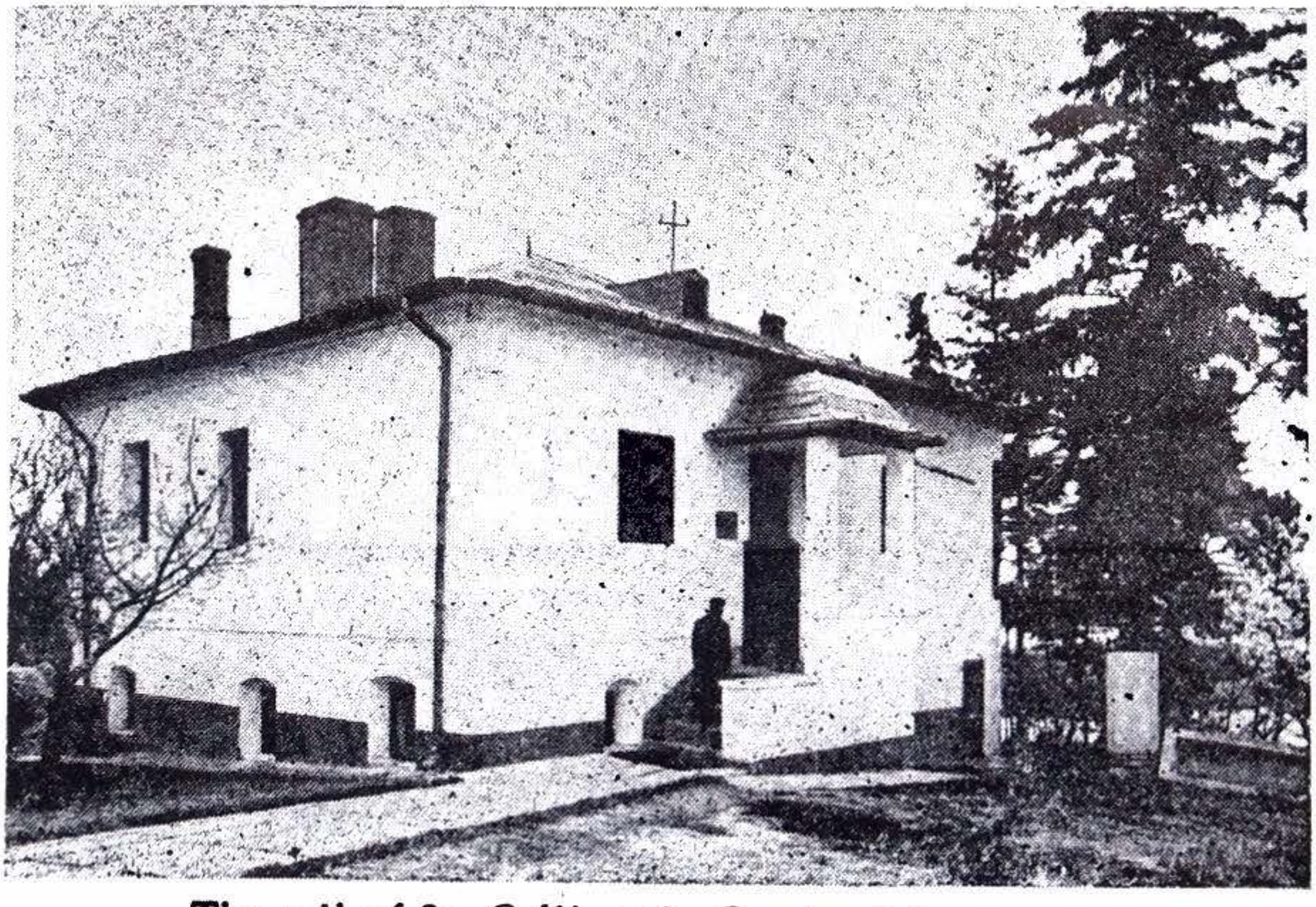


Cernica Monastery tower gate and cells



The prayer-room of St. Callinicus with a portrait of Blessed Paisius on the right

St. Callinicus in the evening of his life



The cell of St. Callicus in Cernica Monastery

St. Callinicus died on the 11th of April, 1868.

He likewise knew the hour of the repose of Metropolitan Niphon, with whom he had conversed for a long time when the latter had come to him to confess. Callinicus was his spiritual father.

After his departure, the same disciple related: "I went in to St. Callinicus and he said to me, 'Know, my son, that Niphon told me everything, and there is hope that the Lord will prolong his days . . . And know that seven years after they dig me up, Metropolitan Niphon will himself enter the grave."

And so it happened. St. Callinicus died on the 11th of April, 1868, and Metropolitan Niphon followed him seven years later, that is, the 5th of May, 1875.

And recalling these prophecies of the Saint, let us recall likewise that the Saint told his disciple about some changes which were to occur in the history of the country:

"Know, my son, that in 1866, Kouza will no longer be the sovereign of the land, and there will be great changes. A foreign prince will be raised to the throne. And know also that in 1877 there will come to our land the Emperor of Russia with his family and his army. He will cross the Danube and will make war with the Turks . . . And with God's help the Rumanians also will have great victories, so that all men will praise and value them. And after this bloody war, there will be a war also with the pen—that is, this will be a matter of politics and diplomacy—and then again there will be a war, such a great one as has never been upon the earth."

The news of the death of the Saint spread with the swiftness of lightning, not only in Bucharest, but in all the other cities and towns also. A multitude came to Cernica so that they might see the Saint for the last time and bow down to him.

He was clothed in garments received as a gift at his ordination as bishop from Safta Brynkovanou, and he was placed in church on a chair with a staff and the Gospel in his hands. Thus he remained for two days in church.

On Saturday, April 16, 1868, at twelve o'clock noon, Metropolitan Niphon arrived with four bishops, and together with all the priests and deacons of the monastery, they celebrated the service for the repose of the soul. St. Callinicus was buried in the narthex of the church of St. George.

St. Callinicus died in total poverty. Everything which he had acquired for the course of his life he gave away to widows, to orphans, for the building of churches, and for other good works. He lived in poverty of his own

free will, in order to fulfill the vow given at the time of his tonsure as a monk. The testament written by him in 1860 can serve as an example to any monk or believer:

"I, the humble Callinicus, Bishop of Rymnik of New Severin, having heard the voice of the Lord which says in the Holy Gospel: Be ye ready, because when ye expect not, the Son of God shall come, in the evening or midnight or when the cock crows, or in the morning, and He cometh without warning; beware lest he find you asleep. Having heard this voice of God, and fearing it, being old and infirm and every minute expecting that hour of God and preparing myself, according to my strength, for my departure from this life, I have decided to write my testament so that no one might seek gold and wealth in my cell. From the moment of my tonsure at the age of 19, I renounced all riches and have collected only holy books. For this reason, do not seek any money or hidden wealth from me. After my death bury me, if I will again be in Cernica, near the new church where I served until my old age. And he who desires to remember my soul, let him remember according to his own good will, because I leave no money for this. And may the merciful Lord God be merciful to all and to me, a sinner, unto the ages of ages. Amen."

Letters

continued.

repeat Golgotha (this is possible even in the days of resurrection), for the general resurrection has not come yet, when already all of the powers of hell will be powerless. And so: whoever wishes to participate in the work of the resurrection should stand up in defense of the resurrection. I, the priest Dimitry Dudko, from the place of Golgotha and the upper room into which the resurrected Christ entered through locked doors, call out to all believers:

1. One must begin increased prayer for all the persecuted in Russia; for this I suggest that separate days be set aside in order to unite the faithful for prayer for the persecuted, thereby creating a general unity.

2. On the eve of (such) prayer, there should be established a fast of three days.

3. There should be appeals, letters, requests to all the persecutors to cease their criminal work.

4. Every undertaking which in one way or another helps the persecutors should be stopped immediately.

5. All possible help should be shown to the persecuted and their families.

Upon our unity depends the resurrection which has begun. One must remember: if Russia is not resurrected, a new Golgotha threatens the whole world, and who knows whether this new Golgotha will lead to resurrection; perhaps it will be only the Golgotha of the foolish thief.

Either resurrection or the perdition of all and everything—it is before such a choice that not only Russia, but the whole world, now stands.

November 4, 1979, Moscow
Priest Dimitry Dudko

Ed. Note: In addition to this new prayer for the imprisoned, the daily services in churches of the Russian Church Outside of Russia contain numerous other prayers for the suffering Orthodox Christians of Russia. Thus, the opening ectenia of every Divine Liturgy and every Vespers and Matins service, after the petition for "the Orthodox episcopate of the persecuted Russian Church," contains petitions:

> "For the God-preserved Russian people in grievous circumstances both in the homeland and in the diaspora, and for their salvation . . ."
>
> "That He may deliver His people from the bitter torment of the atheist rule, and confirm in us oneness of mind, brotherly love and piety . . ."

The same petitions are repeated in the Ectenia of Fervent Supplication at the Liturgy and at the end of daily Vespers and Matins.

In addition, a "prayer for the deliverance of Russia," composed by Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky, is read at the end of the latter ectenia at every Liturgy. Even some priests not belonging to the Russian Church make use of such prayers, imitating in this way the example of the Russian Church in previous centuries, which prayed, both in public and private, for the overthrow of the Turkish yoke which lay upon the Orthodox Christians of Greece and other countries. Fervent prayer is also made, of course, for the Orthodox faithful of other countries under the atheist yoke today.

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